

Amnesia Land

[A television show that never existed,
except in this make-believe version of
the earliest days of television.]

Jonathan D. Steinhoff, June 11, 2011

Scene One:

An imaginary living room setting, essentially the same as the one seen on TCM when Robert Osborne is sitting with someone.

BOBBY OBSBURN

Hello everyone, I'm Bobby Obsburn for Uner Classic Movies, and tonight we have for you a special, very old TELEVISION show, entitled, "Amnesia Land", which is sort of a cross between "Dark City" and "Memento", I think. And with us tonight we're lucky to have someone who was actually there, Zeke. So now, Zeke, as a stagehand when they were making the first episode of "Amnesia Land", what do you remember?

ZEKE

Everything. It was the first television show in history ever to only air one episode. It was THAT long ago.

BOBBY

And – that terrible?

ZEKE

Well, I don't even know if that was it. See, they – the actors - got all these real-life head injuries when they were making this first (and only) one (no one knew what they were doing), so, you know, no one wanted to appear in a second one, you know, and get a real-life head injury.

BOBBY

Ah yes, the story revolves around everyone perpetually getting amnesia by getting conked on the head.

ZEKE

Yessir, you are correct, everyone. And the funny thing is, they have 'em get amnesia over and over and over until it feels like it won't end.

BOBBY

Yes, well, stories about amnesia were very popular - and VERY big at the box office - around the time this TV show episode was made. And aren't they always on the lookout for a new way to trigger audience interest! Well anyway, here it is, the first, last – the ONLY episode EVER made of the TV show, "Amnesia Land". You may just want to keep some aspirin close by.

Scene Two:

Imaginary (non-existent) early TV show episode, "Amnesia Land," set in a late 1940s/early 1950s living room. The image quality is processed to create a sense of the very earliest days of television.

cont'd.

We see a set of various characters, each with a mysterious and potentially dark personality. Each possesses the suggestion that they are involved in some sort of intrigue.

Just about every minute, one by one, each character over time is conked on the head, momentarily losing consciousness, then awakens with amnesia. Each time, as a character awakens, there is always at least one other drawing room character nearby (on occasion, most or even all of the other characters are nearby, gathered around) to tell the amnesiac a totally made-up story, created on the spot, about who he, the newest amnesiac, really is, a story which the amnesiac always innocently buys (or almost always....).

An underlying factor threading its way through the story is the belief that there exists some secret suitcase filled with money (unless it's a statue filled with gold, it being that different versions of what's going on are carefully spread). Those characters who are not directly aware of this “suitcase” catch on that there clearly exists.... something.... something that they are somehow thought by certain others to be in on – something they could be in on considerably more if they develop the right way to play things.

Gradually each character is proceeding from a total misconception about their own identity. It is an interesting moment when the last person to bang his head and get amnesia for the first time finally does, as up until that moment he was the only one left who remembered back beyond some made-up story about his own identity.

It then all happens a second time to each character – he/she bangs his/her head, one by one, all over again, thus again being set up for yet another version of who he/she really is, a version specially concocted for the amnesiac, yet again, by the conspiratorial, mysterious other characters in the living room, all after a suitcase or something.

As things progress, they all move further and further away from having any connection to, or any knowledge of, the actual thread of things, it being that each repeatedly becomes an amnesia victim endlessly, over and over again, until next week, same place, same time, same channel.

The End